

APPROVED 12/19/2007

Present: Charles Kimball; Chair, Mike Nygren, Town Administrator Heidi Carlson, Recording Secretary Kathy Arsenault, Public Jeanne Nygren, Pat Martel, Doug McElroy, Town Clerk Lori Holmes, Andy Kohlhofer, Peg Pinkham, and Peter Bearse.

Charles Kimball called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm.

Lori Holmes, Town Clerk, was here to propose the budget for the Town Clerk's Office. Proposals were passed amongst the committee. Kimball wanted to start with the salary line of the budget. Kohlhofer asked when the wage matrix is due back. Holmes said she was not sure; she would have to check with Heidi. Nygren asked if the town was not doing a wage matrix what numbers would you use. Holmes stated that she was not sure yet. She continued that she could get the numbers for the committee. Pinkham asked would the numbers be closer to last year's numbers that I had asked to revisit regarding the Town Clerk salary at town meeting. Pinkham said that the deputy town clerk pay had been reflected in the budget, but hadn't been re-proposed. Pinkham continued that if the numbers are going to be reflected of that, perhaps we could start there. Kimball stated that last year the figure of \$36,700 was what the selectmen proposed. Nygren said no, it was proposed at 3% when Peg asked for reconsideration, rather than why don't we split the difference. That is where the \$33,681 came from. Kimball stated that we recommended \$34,700. Pinkham said yes, that was the split. Nygren stated that was the only one we had to reconsider. Martel said that was the \$4000 difference. Pinkham stated that there was a vote for reconsideration at town meeting, but obviously we missed it. It was done and over before you knew it. She continued that we missed our Deputy Town Clerk reapportionment entirely. Pinkham stated that this is something she would like to bring up. Pinkham stated that at town meeting she thought to bring it up for reconsideration, but motioned it wrong. She continued that she would like to take this opportunity with the budget committee to take a look at this from the point of our intent which was to be ½ this year and ½ last year. Holmes stated that she recalculates the numbers for the Town Clerk and the Deputy Town Clerk each year. Pinkham stated that what was part of the intent, was not what came through. Nygren said that may be correct but I don't remember that. Kimball suggested going back to the minutes from last year's town meeting and seeing what the budget committee passed. McElroy stated the vote was for what the selectmen had passed for recommendation. Pinkham stated that most people didn't really understand that the intent of my motion last year was to increase ½ of the proposed salary increase. She continued that the Town Clerk should see 50% of that this year and that the Deputy who didn't see any reapportions last year should see 100% of it this year. Nygren stated that it didn't pass through the town meeting last year. Pinkham asked do you not agree that last year town meeting was really confusing. Nygren said that it was the first big vote where we did reconsideration. Pinkham stated that we came to a compromise as a budget committee, how it was presented at town meeting was confusing. Was the intent to give the \$34,700 to the Town Clerk? She continued that she would like to clarify this and present it as new this year.

Holmes stated that she is starting at ground zero. That is what she does every year. She continued that what was used within the office, type of supplies, services provided, she calculates prices for the following year with an approximate 2% increase for price increases. Each line is started at zero each and every year. Nygren stated that last year we had no problems with budgets for line items like new equipment, it was the stipend or pay that was an issue. Nygren continued that you put in for new computer this year, not a problem. But going back on the data and history of your department the pay and the hours have grown two-fold. You are now at 65 hours/week and now looking for 70 hours/week. He continued I know you offer other new services, but you are not serving many more people. Even with the amount of time you need to provide for a service, your workload is not growing. Holmes said, I can say that in 9 years of doing this job, the number of hours in my rationale to back up what my salary request is, is what I put in minimum, guaranteed. It is a minimum of the work done by me. Nygren asked how can you tell me that you need 70 hours combined per week. Holmes stated that in the office we are doing different work now, than last year. Bearse asked what records show the number of transactions and the workload. Pinkham questioned the Chair of the point of

legality and that this is sensitive. This is a complaint that we have been hearing for 5 to 7 years, people fulfilling the roles on a more personal commitment than on time. Betty, Ruth and Mary had done this for a long time and let it build up until we reached a point where the workload was unbalanced. She continued that it has been pointed out before, and we were under paying people for a long period of time for the work that they were doing. Nygren said that the people that had those jobs and the number of years they did them they worked part-time for the love of the job. I am not questioning the 40 hours for the Town Clerk; it is the workload at 40 hours a week. This has now become a career. He continued, that to the point, you can't continually add hours to justify your workload; you can't run a business that way. You don't need an additional 5 hours; you need to do the work yourself.

Holmes said that she understands they are taking this seriously and have done their homework, and as a taxpayer, she appreciates their volunteerism. She continued that would like to give a few examples. She stated that what the Town Clerk's office does, is varied and diverse, not only servicing those in our community, but throughout the state, and people from out of state. The services we provide are across the board. To give you a few examples, someone is recently widowed, and that surviving spouse has to come into the office, that person has no idea what to do with the vehicles that are in the decedent's name. It takes care and compassion, taking time to console them and explain to them what each of the legal documents mean. They may need to do boats, trailers, etc. and it takes time to give that information to that spouse, without it being a money transaction. That can take up to a ½ hour. Or the mother who is 9 months pregnant, buying a cemetery lot for her unborn child because she knows that her unborn child is not going to survive. Things like this can put a hardship on the people waiting in line. Each person presents his or her own situation. Nygren said yes I understand that, and it is unfortunate. He continued that we are looking at this as a fair budget, and fair workload, and instances like these are not all that frequent. He continued that the bottom line is you are budgeting for 30 hours, but the workload hasn't grown.

Pinkham asked are you looking at the revenue. Nygren said no. Holmes said that office isn't based on individual transactions. Each day the work done for the DMV is separate reports, separate deposits, etc. At the end of each day the work that gets done is entered into the town computer. All transactions from the DMV then have to be keyed into the town computer, sometimes done in between customers. Nygren said are you doing it while you do the state. Holmes said no, it is two different programs. Nygren asked why don't you download from one to the other. Holmes stated we can't, they are two completely different systems. Nygren asked if the state audits differently. Holmes said yes, and the town audits different than the state. The town system records all town transactions, licensing of all dogs and dog warrants for the Animal Control Officer and the Board of Selectmen. She continued that there are reports run every day from the state, town and vital records. Pinkham stated that what I am hearing from Lori is an increase in the amount of reporting, that has to be documented. Pinkham asked is this what is happening Lori. Holmes stated yes each agency, at the state level, for which we provide a service 75% of them require reports on a daily basis. She added that it takes time at the end of the day to balance out and generate reports. Nygren stated you are open 31 hours/week leaving you 9 hours for administration. Nygren added that the administration work should be done then. There is a lot of time for administration work. Holmes stated that unfortunately with this office, the state computers, the town computer and vital statistics, can only be run at end-of-day. You can't decide at noontime to total out. If you don't balance, you go through every transaction until you can find the balance. Every agency at the state level wants reports.

Kohlhofer asked why isn't the software compatible. Holmes explained it doesn't work that way. We are what is called a browser town, it is free from the state. You can purchase software from a state certified vendor, but the town pays for it. Being a browser town to the state doesn't cost us anything. Pinkham asked about pricing of the vendor software. Holmes stated that Avitar (who we use for the Town computer) just became certified with the state and is priced at about \$10000 to buy their software. It is additional fees for upgrading. Holmes stated that this could run about \$15000 for software with upgrades. Nygren asked would you say that you run about 15-20 reports a day. Holmes said yes. Nygren asked of those how many have to be returned to the state. Holmes said all of them. Nygren stated that he didn't see where decals were listed.

Holmes said that decals fall under municipal agent fees. Nygren said but you are not a municipal agent because you receive a salary. Holmes stated that she is a municipal agent. Nygren asked with the number of transactions from last year if you were collecting fees with a \$5000 stipend, how much would you have made. Holmes stated about \$32000. Nygren said with all your work as a municipal agent you would only make \$32000 a year and the town would pickup the Deputy salary. Nygren added you are getting paid more than if you worked on fees. Holmes stated yes, that is correct, but the State of NH and the LGC do not recommend any town going back to fees. It protects the town and the town clerks. She continued that it goes into auditing issues. Bearse stated that we need some focus here. With the Town Clerk salary, we are talking about time and money. He continued that we can't judge the salary rate until we get the matrix study back. It is hard to tell the minimum worked per week. He stated that there is a steady increase in the dollar amount of auto registrations, but without some indication from you, I can't judge the minimum time it takes to do your job. Holmes stated that it depends on the person in front of the window. Sometimes it takes 5 or 10 minutes, some with 10 registrations could take 20 minutes. We have a high turnover of new residents, and it takes time to work on new residents, with vehicles from out of state.

Pinkham asked if this year is based on 40hrs and 30 hrs what was it last year. Holmes stated that it was 40hrs and 25hrs, and she is increasing the Deputy Town Clerk by 5 hours. Pinkham said that in following Peter's line, could we see some justification. Holmes stated that there isn't just 1 report to show. Pinkham said you could look at the time allotment. Kohlhofer stated that we asked 2 years ago for a time study. Pinkham stated that is what we are looking for is a time allotment sheet. Pinkham added that for many years employees took a lot on their shoulders without being compensated properly. Nygren said I would agree. Holmes added that she did that as well. Nygren stated but you are working toward 2 full time positions, when you are actually doing the same amount of work. The workload for transactions, dogs, and vitals have been consistent for the last few years, the town has leveled off now. He continued you are looking for 2 full-time positions when it is really 2 part-time positions. Perhaps to the budget committee this seems crude and crass, but they don't justify 70 hours. Bearse stated I agree with the line of questioning, but I can't judge with this data. Nygren added that looking at the numbers over a period of time, the hours continue to grow, the money doesn't mean anything, they are only a figure.

Holmes stated I can fully understand what you are saying. Holmes said that perhaps you should just come in and stand in the corner to have a better understanding of the office. It is not all cut and dry. I have numbers from the building inspector with the number of units out there and the number of units to be built. I pretty much worked alone for 5 years in that office, and people don't want to wait in line, they want service. They wanted the office to be open until 8 o'clock and now they have it. They wanted me (years ago) to be open on Saturdays; I did it for 2 years. I eventually had to go to the selectmen and say that it didn't work. Nygren stated so you closed on Saturday, but now you're open Monday, you haven't increased your workload yet you grew 50% from 40 to 60 hours. He continued that last year went from 20 to 25 hours on the part timer. That's 25% and you can't keep going this way. Martel asked what is your history of open hours. Holmes stated that it used to be 11 hours and a \$10000 salary. I upped it to 17 hours because that is what people wanted. Holmes stated that it went from 17 hours in 1999 to now 31 hours in 2007. She added that some services and transactions are not reflected in the numbers. It takes time to explain to the new bride about Social Security, Banking, Driver's licensing, etc., and those numbers aren't reflected in there. Those 15 minutes of time is not reflected in the numbers. Or when someone is inquiring about cemetery lots, these types of service don't always have a dollar amount. Bearse stated that we can't budget based on exceptional cases. To make sense of the numbers we need average time for transactions, to see what it adds up to. Pinkham stated that there is a difference in state documentation requirement; she has seen it in her own business. What used to require filing of 1 form is now the filing of 3 forms. Bearse said I think the office of the Town Clerk, next to the Town Administration is the most important office in town government. That being said I have 2 questions. To Lori, #1 what you are doing the most of are fairly routine transactions, so what are you doing to improve the efficiency of the exceptional transactions. #2 what are you hoping to do with the office in the area of efficiency. Holmes replied that there is not a lot you can do with the state the equipment. It is state owned; you can either be a browser town free of charge or software based at about

\$15000. Either way you still have to key in data. Even if we went with a vendor to do the town portion, there would be no difference as far as efficiency. The state would strip us of state owned equipment. The town would then have to purchase 2 new computers, 2 new validators, etc. If you are purchasing software, the town has to pay for that, whereas the browser town is provided by the state.

Bearse asked if the registration transactions could be done from home. Holmes stated that we now offer mail-ins; they are mailed out the middle of the month prior to your renewal month. Some residents choose to mail in the registrations, others just like knowing what to expect the fees to be. Martel asked can you register your vehicles on line. Holmes stated no, only if your town participates in E-reg. She continued that the mailers are the first step. Martel noted that yes, Newton has. She continued that some towns allow you to pay online for all municipal fees, even property taxes. Holmes stated that we don't know if it is cost effective, especially when people pay by charge card. The town has to incur the fees, at least in NH. McElroy said that the credit card company makes up that fee. Holmes said yes, but the town pays for it. McElroy asked how do we compare to other towns as far as hours open. Holmes said some are 30 to 40 hours open. And some are only 25 or 26. McElroy asked if they need more hours as well. Holmes stated that the Raymond office recently decreased their open hours to allow more time for end of day and they have 4 girls working there. In comparison to us we may be half the size, but we do it with only 2 people. Nygren stated that you do about 41/2 transactions per hour during 31 open hours, and that's being generous. Nygren continued that if the workload has changed, why are your Thursdays open for 9 hours. Do you really need to be open 33% of your weekly hours in one long day? Wouldn't it be more beneficial to start at 3 or 4 until 8pm, then take those 4 hours and use them for administrative work? Holmes said that it could work, but you have end of the month where it is really busy. Nygren said then at the end of the month open for extra hours. Holmes said people would get confused when you don't have steady, set hours. She continued that on Thursdays, they are here at 11am waiting, and they want services.

Kohlhofer asked is the presidential election this year. Holmes said yes, and we already have about 60 requests for absentee ballots. Kohlhofer asked is that for the primary. Holmes said yes. Kohlhofer noted that 1600 voted in the last presidential election. Holmes said yes. Nygren stated you are talking about a one-month time that you are busy. You can't justify the hours to me. Holmes then described the duties of the town clerk. She also read aloud from the 2005 town report about the history of the town clerk. Nygren said that reading the statutes, I agree 100% you serve the public and you do a good job, and I am just going to leave it at that.

Kimball asked for the figures for salary. Pinkham stated she believed they were working off the 3%. Holmes stated I have done the 2.5% plus 3% on the matrix with a step. Holmes continued that in the past couple of years, since 2005, there has been no pay increase for the town clerk. When I went from 25 hours to 40 hours the increase in the town clerk's salary was just for the hours worked. The increase was based only on the additional hours. Nygren said it was a 33% raise. He continued you asked for the 40 hours a week and they gave you an \$8000 raise. Holmes no they did not. Nygren said but it was your choice. Holmes replied that it was the choice of my constituents; this goes into services that the people want. Nygren said it is not that you aren't doing the work, you are overusing the hours. The workload doesn't justify the additional hours you have asked for. Kohlhofer asked when is the busiest time of the week. Holmes stated that Mon. Tues. and Thurs. are the busiest. Kohlhofer asked do people take time off from work to make it to the town clerk's office. Holmes said yes, that is why we just started the mail-ins. We receive about 75 per month back from the 200 average we send out. Pinkham stated that is a pretty decent number. Kohlhofer asked is that why postage has doubled. Holmes said yes. Holmes stated that E-reg is something that is fairly new and the towns that utilize E-reg are a small number. She continued that we need more positive and negative feedback on this. For a small community it may not be worth the time or cost because for each registration there is a fee that is incurred by the town. Holmes stated that the number one job of the town clerk is service to the constituents. Bearse asked does the E-reg program put the auto owner in direct contact with Concord. Holmes stated no, not at all, there are still fees that are accountable to the town. Nygren asked how many

hours were you open last year. Holmes replied 27. Nygren said and now you are open on Mondays. Holmes said yes. Martel asked did you come up with the salary number yet.

A discussion began regarding software packaging, pricing and purchasing of it. It was discussed about the special nature of the town's software being customized according to individual department. It was discussed as to whether the town departments could be networked together. Holmes explained to the committee that the Town Clerk's Office couldn't be networked due to privacy law. The state would not allow us to do that. Kohlhofer asked if the doubling of the postage is due to the mail-in registrations. Holmes stated yes. Nygren asked what do you realize back for every registration. Holmes stated that it is \$1.00 per vehicle registration. Nygren asked how much have you realized thus far. Holmes stated that she was not sure. Nygren asked about how many of these transactions do you do a day. Holmes replied about 10, but the \$1.00 is not per person, it is per registration. Nygren asked if at the end of the year you realized \$800 in fees, would you say it justifies the \$3000 in postage. Holmes said yes, and if necessary I would leave it up to the people to decide. Holmes stated that this mail-in system is not meant to be a moneymaker; it is providing a service. Nygren stated it has to offset something. Holmes explained that there could be a 41-cent charge on a mail-in, but that person has \$4.00 in convenience fees. And you pay the fee if you opt to do it by mail. Holmes stated that the want for this seemed to be there, but people are not utilizing it.

Kohlhofer asked if we were doing this program last year. Holmes said no, it just started in June 2007. He asked if the postage amount was dedicated just to mail-ins. Holmes replied no, it is for all the daily work, including titles, registrations, title applications etc. Kohlhofer asked if the day's work could be e-mailed to the state. Holmes said no, the hard copies are mailed in and it is all saved on microfiche.

Nygren asked about the records restoration and how long do we expect to continue with it. Holmes said it is ongoing, and we will keep going until we are caught up. She continued that we are caught up on vital records and still working on planning and zoning, etc. The town has been supportive of this every year. I have received a \$10000 grant for record's restoration. The town of Fremont was recognized as one out of 4 in the state with upstanding and commendable record's restoration. Kohlhofer asked why that \$10000 revenue is not in the budget. Holmes stated that the state has an independent firm come in and they identify what kind of needs the town has. They determined that we needed a new storage cabinet. I don't spend it, the Division of Vital Records hires someone to oversee the grant program, we don't receive the money directly, and it goes to the state. Kohlhofer asked is the \$10000 annually. Holmes said no it was a one-time grant. Martel stated that since Oct. no money has been spent. Holmes replied that we just received the bill. Kohlhofer noted that it would be great if the town had a professional grant writer. Holmes said yes, but it would be a fulltime job just doing that.

Kimball asked if the committee had any more questions, for the Town Clerk. Martel asked what numbers the Town Clerk would use as salary numbers. Holmes asked if she could have a few minutes to speak to Heidi and calculate the numbers. Kimball said yes. Kohlhofer motioned to recess, Bearse seconded. The meeting was recessed at 8:38pm.

At 8:45pm Nygren motioned to continue the meeting, Kohlhofer seconded and the meeting continued.

Annmarie Scribner passed out budget proposals for the Fremont Tax Collector. Kohlhofer asked did you bring in the delinquency rate numbers. Scribner said no, I do not have them yet.

Holmes re-entered the meeting with the numbers for salaries. She began with \$13.00/hour for the Deputy Town Clerk and \$35,700 or \$17.16/hour for the Town Clerk. Holmes asked if there was anything else the committee would like for her to bring back for them to review. Kohlhofer asked are these numbers just estimates, Holmes replies yes. Pinkham asked about time recorded per transactions. Holmes stated that she would do the best she could do to get some numbers. Pinkham stated that she was referring to the increase in documentation required, such as what used to require you one form now requires three. Kohlhofer asked is

there an increase in the number of different reports. Holmes stated yes, it is pretty much that each line item is a different report. Holmes stated that daily deposits are done for the state, as the state of NH does not allow anymore than \$500 of state money on the premises. It needs to go to the bank. Nygren said at the close of business. Holmes said no, not ever totaling \$500 in our office, they want it in the bank. Nygren stated he had read the same thing and read it differently. Holmes suggested calling the state of NH Financial Responsibility Dept to clarify if he wanted to. Kimball thanked the Town Clerk and Holmes left the meeting at 8:52pm.

Scribner continued with the Tax Collector budget, stating that it is more or less the same as last year. She stated that the Service Agreement was paid early and because of that received a 15% discount. Heidi had suggested paying early for the 15% discount. The \$53 for the Service Agreement can be taken out. She continued that postage has had an increase. She explained that this is my first year, so I am not sure I can only estimate from past years. Kohlhofer stated that the total proposed budget is going up \$100. Scribner said yes, due to postage, printer cartridges, tax bills. She continued that as of now she doesn't really see a need for a lot of things. It is hard to estimate this year. She explained that she did not propose a salary increase for the Tax Collector, because she is still learning and hasn't been on the job long enough. Nygren asked with the Deputy Tax Collector how are you going to propose the same stipend that Ruthie got. He continued that she has been working both sides now, how do you keep track, and are you keeping track. Scribner stated that she does not know how it is being done, she asked Holmes to keep a tally. Nygren replied you don't know exactly. Scribner stated that she is here anyways, doing clerk work, and as I proposed to the selectmen, she is keeping a tally. She keeps track of how many payments she takes in, but most of her work is done after hours. Nygren said that \$5300 for 5 hours/week would be \$20/hour. That's an awful lot for a part time job, that's a lot of pay. He continued that if we started making phone calls we would find that most part-timers here are being paid \$12 \$13 or \$14/hour. He stated that Mary and Ruth were doing most of their work from home. Scribner stated that on Tues. she is here for at least 4 or more hours and on Thurs. from at least 5 to 9pm. She continued that she does flag phone calls from outside the building.

Scribner said it is my first year, I don't know how it is going to work it out. This appointment is only until March. When Ruthie resigned, I needed a Deputy, Lori seemed like the right fit. Her office is open 31 hours a week, were she can take payments and stamp tax bills. Nygren asked if it was figured out regarding the stipend that she is doing 40 hours at the clerk job and tax collecting at the same time. Scribner stated that there are others who have dual jobs in this office, they get stipends for them, the times crossover and they make it up at the other end; it is not just the Tax Collector's Office. She stated that it is something that happens. We have very honest people here who when they say they are going to make up 15 minutes at the end of the day, they do. We will see how it goes at least until March. McElroy asked have you been logging your time. Scribner said yes, and the Deputy as well. The months of Nov. and Dec. are busy. This week alone she work with me from 4pm to midnight. She continued these months would continue like this unless we change the bills to go out twice per year.

Martel asked how it had been done before. Scribner said when I first became Tax Collector; I wasn't utilizing a Deputy as one had been used before. So I was going to pay her hourly. Nygren asked whether you utilize them or not do you still have to pay them, and where does it say it could be an hourly wage in the budget. Nygren continued if you were paying \$15/hour to Ruthie, why don't you pay your new Deputy \$15/hour. Scribner said you need to take into consideration what is being used and for what purpose. Nygren asked during your months as tax collector, how many payments did you take in during a month? Scribner said not many. Nygren asked then why are we paying out \$5300 for the Deputy Tax Collector. Scribner said I wanted to just keep a log of it for 2-3 months. Nygren said but during the course of a 10-month period there is not a whole lot of work. Scribner said I can't say it is going to be an hour or 2 or 3, I don't know yet. I can't fault myself for not knowing. Nygren said if you knew how many bills were being paid on a monthly basis, lets say 10 or 20 a month; you would have an idea of how many transactions she is taking in. He continued you might be only be talking about 3 hours a month. This is a dual position Deputy Tax Collector and full-time Town Clerk. Someplace along the line, it has to be justified by the number of

transactions that the person is doing. Bearse asked if we could determine how the Deputy Tax Collector's time is accounted for. He continued that this type of documentation would be helpful. Nygren stated that the Deputy's pay is up to \$20/hour, whereas before it was \$15/hour. Scribner stated she does not disagree with what he is saying, but that it is a \$5300 stipend. He suggested to Scribner that she come back with an hourly wage instead of a flat summary. Kimball said that actually it says salary, but I don't believe that it is salaried. Pinkham stated that we need everyone on the same page; let her work as an evaluation period for about a year. Bearse stated that they are both new, but we need to see an evaluation of time for the tasks performed.

Pinkham stated that they are knocking off \$100 to come in at an even budget. Scribner said that the trust fund budget doesn't belong with the Tax Collector budget. Kimball said that we could figure this out. It should be the same as 2007. Pinkham said that we take trust funds to 0, reduce the Deputy to \$5275, and the \$53 from the service agreements. That even lines the budget down to \$28234, same as last year.

With no further questions, the committee thanked Scribner, who left the meeting at 9:14pm.

Kohlhofer asked about the program by the Univ. of Chicago. He asked Pinkham if she could bring in the 1st, 3rd, and 5th grade textbooks. Pinkham asked if this is for budgetary questions or curriculum questions. Kohlhofer said budget, I want to know what we are spending our money on. Pinkham stated the letter and those questions have nothing to do with what everyday math costs us. Pinkham said you are talking about one particular piece of curriculum. Kohlhofer said I don't think it's worth the money. Pinkham stated that the budget committee is stepping outside its realm here with questions about the curriculum. Pinkham said if you would like to see what it cost us for the textbooks for the last 5 years, I will supply it to you. Kimball said no, I don't think we need you to do that. Pinkham added but you do want it for at least where he is questioning the curriculum. Kohlhofer said I think it is a bogus program. Pinkham said then let's be honest here, you are exceeding the duties of the budget committee. Kohlhofer stated that he would take a day off and come down and look at it. Pinkham said no, every person on the budget committee needs to be equally educated on your line of questioning. She added that this is not the practice for a budget committee member. Kohlhofer said then I will take it up at town meeting. Nygren said, you are not wrong, when it comes to available funds, they can spend it as they want and aren't accountable to us. Kohlhofer said the bottom line is that they can spend money anyway they want.

Kimball stated that we have the meeting Saturday December 8th at 9:00am with the School Board. He asked if some would want to meet here prior to the meeting to have a work-study. Nygren added that there might be some stuff that just needs clarification. Kohlhofer noted that the meeting time has already been posted. Carlson said you can post a work session with 24 hours notice and you need 5 members for a quorum. Pinkham reminded that the more information needed that can be presented in advance, would give us Friday and Saturday to prepare. She continued if we have questions, let's get the answers.

Bearse asked does the state law say that we need a superintendent ½ a week, 1/3 a week or full-time. Pinkham said that Fremont has never had a 40-hour/week superintendent. She continued that she would find out what the state law dictates. Bearse said OK and what are the minimum requirements.

A discussion regarding dates for submission of citizen's petitions began. It was also discussed regarding the town meeting in March, as well as the school district meeting also in March. The possibility of both meetings being scheduled for the same day in March was discussed as well. Kohlhofer stated that we need to get some clarification on the dates. Carlson added that the dates cannot be set for the public hearings until town meeting date is set. Pinkham stated that she would check the dates for the school district meeting and get back to the committee.

Carlson stated that she had some follow-up clarification from last week. With regard to the health insurance, there was a spreadsheet number that was incorrect; correcting it raised it to \$109000 about 2%. Carlson passed out the new spreadsheet with the corrected line item.

Kimball motioned to accept the minutes of November 28, as amended, Bearse seconded it.

Carlson passed out budgets for the committee to review for next week. Nygren asked if anymore department heads would be coming in. Carlson said yes, Thom Roy would be here next week.

With nothing further to discuss, Pinkham motioned to adjourn the meeting, Kohlhofer seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 9:45pm.

The next scheduled meeting of the budget committee is Saturday December 8th at 9:00am to hear the budget for the school.

Respectfully submitted

Kathy Arsenault
Recording Secretary